PERSONAL SAFETY during **LIGHTNING**

Lightning Facts

- Virtually anything can get struck by lightning!
  - Tree / animal / human / building /aircraft /ship /light pole /crane /vehicle
- Lightning strikes are absolutely

  UN**PREDICTABLE!!!!**
  - **Place of strike / Intensity / Destruction potential**
- **Lightning discharges produce very high current!!- Kilo Amperes**

More Lightning Facts

- **25% of Lightning victims die!**
- **Lightning damage probability is higher in summer**
- **85% of lightning strike victims are children and young men (10 to 35 years old) engaged in work & recreation**
- **14 % under tree lightning strike deaths**
- **70% strikes happen between June & August**

Lightning Myths

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS AND MYTHS

1. Lightning never strikes twice... *it strikes the Empire State Building in NYC some 22-25 times per year!*

2. Rubber tires or a foam pad will insulate me from lightning... *it takes about 10,000 volts to create a one inch spark. Lightning has millions of volts and easily can jump 10-20 feet!*

3. Lightning rods will protect my ropes course...*lightning rods are "preferential attachment points" for lightning. You do not want to "draw" lightning to any area with people nearby.*

4. We should get off the water when boating, canoeing or sailing...*tall trees and rocky outcrops along shore and on nearby land may be a more dangerous place.*

5. A cave is a safe place in a thunderstorm...*if it is shallow cave, or an old mine with metallics nearby, it can be a deadly location during lightning.*

Unsafe Areas

- **Small structures including huts & rain shelters.**
- **Nearby metallic objects like fences, gates, instrumentation and electrical equipment, wires, and power poles.**
- **AVOID isolated trees, AVOID water, AVOID open fields**
- **Avoid being in or near high places (tanks / towers / stacks) or open fields or under isolated trees, under communication towers, flagpoles, metal fences**
- **On open water (boating)**

More Unsafe Areas

- When inside a building, avoid use of the telephone, taking a shower, washing your hands, electrical wiring, cable TV wiring, plumbing, being near windows & balconies
- Parking lots / tennis courts / golf courses / athletic fields / tents & temporary structures
- Near clotheslines, wire fences, overhead wires and rail-road tracks

SAFE AREAS

- Large, metal-framed & enclosed structures
- Lightning-protected buildings
- Fully enclosed metal vehicles, with rolled-up windows (avoid contact with metal surfaces outside or inside the vehicle)
- City streets shielded by nearby buildings
- Underground shelters such as tunnels, caves
- Seek depressed areas / dense woods
- **Do not go out-of-doors or remain out, unless absolutely necessary**

SAFETY TIPS

LIGHTNING SAFETY TIPS

AVOID: Avoid water. Avoid all metallic objects. Avoid the high ground. Avoid solitary tall trees. Avoid close contact with others - spread out 15-20 ft. apart. Avoid contact with dissimilar objects (water & land; boat & land; rock & ground; tree & ground). Avoid open spaces.

SEEK: Seek clumps of shrubs or trees of uniform height. Seek ditches, trenches or the low ground. Seek a low, crouching position with feet together with hands on ears to minimize acoujstic shock from thunder.

KEEP: Keep a high level of safety awareness for thirty minutes after the last observed lightning or thunder.

Lightning Safety Crouch

When caught in an open area and no shelter is available, the SAFEST POSITION IS THE CROUCHING POSITION (like a baseball catcher)

First Aid Recommendations

- **Contact EMS (911) and re-locate the victim to a low-lightning risk area**
- **Start resuscitation if the victim is not breathing**
- **If no pulse is detected, start cardiac compression (CPR)**

Victims do not retain an electrical charge and are safe to handle! Most lightning victims can actually survive their encounter with lightning, especially with timely medical treatment.